

UTILITY APPLICATION
FOR
UNITED STATES LETTER PATENT

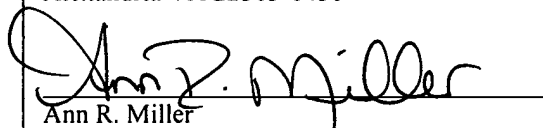
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Title: **System and Method For Absorbing Liquid on
Outside of Bottle Neck**

Docket No. **438P2028**

I hereby certify that this paper, fee transmittal, utility transmittal, 10 page application, Declaration, assignment, assignment transmittal, 4 pages of formal drawings, a check in the amount of \$425.00 is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as Express Mail with a label no. of EV 191632339 on December 5, 2003 to Mail Stop Patent Application, Commissioner for Patents; PO Box 1450, Alexandria VA 22313-1450


Ann R. Miller

Date: December 5, 2003

EV191632339US

Application Of: Mark Paikin and Cindy Paikin

For: System and Method for Absorbing Liquids on Outside of Bottle Necks

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to absorbing wine or other liquids which may run down the exterior surface of a bottle neck following pouring of the liquid from the bottle. More specifically, the invention relates to the combination with a bottle having a base and a neck portion of a liquid-absorbing material to essentially eliminate liquid from flowing past a position relatively high on the exterior surface of a bottle neck after pouring liquid from the opening at the top of the bottle neck.

[0002] Various means have been employed to absorb liquid on the exterior surface of a bottle, particularly liquid which may run down the surface of a bottle neck after pouring a portion of the bottle's contents into a glass and prior to pouring an additional portion or the remainder of the bottle's contents. Such situations arise most frequently in connection with the pouring of wine. A napkin or other cloth is often held or tied around the bottle neck to absorb droplets of wine which run down the outside of neck between pouring operations.

[0003] It is a principal object of the present invention to provide novel and improved structure and methods of absorbing liquid which runs down the outside of a bottle after tipping the bottle to pour out a portion of its contents and returning the bottle to an upright position.

[0004] A further object is to provide a simple and inexpensive article for combination with a bottle to absorb liquid on the outside of a bottle, and which further adds visual appeal to the bottle.

[0005] Other objects will in part be obvious and will in part appear hereinafter.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] Basically, the present invention includes a length of flexible cord made of liquid- absorbing material, and at least one retaining member having parallel passageways through which the cord passes, in frictional engagement with the passageways, in combination with a bottle having base and neck portions. In a first disclosed embodiment, the two ends of the cord are passed through the passageways, leaving a closed loop of cord on one side of the retaining member which is slid upon the cord to tighten the loop in substantially surrounding relation to the neck. The two ends of the cord are preferably about the same distance from the retaining member, and the portions of the cord between the ends and the retaining member extend down the base of the bottle. Weighted balls of diameter larger than the passageways may be affixed to the ends of the cord after passing the ends through the retaining means passageways to serve a number of functions such as preventing fraying of the cord ends, preventing separation of the cord and retaining member and adding weight to ensure that the cords extend neatly down the base of the bottle to add to the decorative effect.

[0007] Second and third embodiments are illustrated and described. In both of these embodiments, the closed loop on one side of the retaining member is again placed around the bottle in substantially surrounding relation to the neck. In the second embodiment, the cord portions extending from each passageway are passed around the bottle neck from the front side, i.e., the side where the retaining member is positioned, to the opposite side and back to the front side and looped over one another, or tied in a knot, on the front side directly below the retaining member, with the ends again extending

down the base of the bottle. In the third embodiment, the cord is passed around the bottle neck in the same manner as in the second embodiment, but instead of looping or tying the cord to itself, a second retaining member, identical to the first, is provided; the cord ends are passed through the second retaining member which is positioned directly below the first on the front side of the bottle.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The present invention will be more fully understood and appreciated by reading the following Detailed Description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0009] Figure 1 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the article of the invention in combination with a typical bottle of the type for which the invention is intended;

[0010] Figure 2 is a perspective view of the bottle in combination with a second embodiment of the liquid-absorbing article;

[0011] Figure 3 is a perspective view of a third embodiment of the article and bottle combination; and

[0012] Figures 4 and 5 are rear and side elevational views, respectively, of the retaining member portion of the article with fragments of the cord extending therethrough.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0013] Referring now to the drawings, bottle 10 includes base portion 12, neck portion 14, of smaller diameter than the base portion, and intermediate portion 16, of varying diameter, where the base and neck are integrally merged. Bottle 10 includes the

usual opening at the top of neck 14 through which a liquid which, for purposes of the present discussion, will be assumed to be wine, is placed into and poured from bottle 10. In Figures 1-3 sealing means 18, which may include a cork, covers the opening and is removed prior to pouring. The invention includes, in combination with bottle 10, an article designed to absorb wine which may run down the outside surface of the bottle following pouring of a portion of the wine and return of the bottle to an upright or semi-upright position. The article includes a length of flexible cord 20 and retaining member 22. As seen in Figures 4 and 5, retaining member 22 includes base 24, having a decorative forward surface and a pair of laterally adjacent, cylindrical passageways 26 and 28 affixed to its rear surface. Cord 20 is of a material which is liquid-absorbent, at least on its surface and preferably throughout, and includes opposite ends 30 and 32 which are contained within and hidden by balls 34 and 36, respectively, in the illustrated versions.

[0014] In assembly, ends 30 and 32 are passed through passageways 26 and 28, respectively, and balls 34 and 36 are then affixed. Cord 20 is of the same or slightly larger diameter as passageways 26 and 28, whereby the cord is frictionally engaged by the inner surfaces of the passageways, and the solid, larger diameter balls prevent withdrawal of the cord through the passageways. Portions 38 and 40 of cord 20 extend from passageways 26 and 28, respectively, and form a closed loop on one side of retaining member 22. Portions 42 and 44 extend from the other side of the retaining member and extend therefrom to ends 30 and 32, respectively, in the Figure 1 embodiment wherein the closed loop formed by cord portions 38 and 40 is placed around neck 14, retaining member 22 is slid to tighten the loop around the neck, and cord

portions 42 and 44 extend downwardly over base portion 12. With cord 20 in this position, bottle 10 may be opened and tipped to pour wine from the open end, returned to the illustrated upright position and all or substantially all wine which travels down the exterior surface of neck 14 will be absorbed by the portion of cord 20 encircling the bottle neck.

[0015] In the Figure 2 embodiment, the portions of cord 20 extending from retaining member 20 on the side opposite the closed loop formed by portions 38 and 40, such portions being denoted by reference numerals 46 and 48, are passed from the front (illustrated) side of bottle 10 to the rear side, crossed over one another, and passed back to the front side. The cord portions passing from rear to front side are numbered 50 and 52, and are looped over, or (preferably) tied to form knot 54, from which portions 42 and 44 extend to ends 30 and 32, respectively. Knot 54 is replaced in the Figure 3 embodiment by second retaining member 22', preferably identical to retaining member 22, the passage of cord 20 around bottle 10 being the same as in the Figure 2 embodiment. In all three embodiments, balls 34 and 36 are of greater density than cord 20, preferably being spherical, metallic balls crimped to ends 30 and 32, thereby assisting in maintaining cord portions 42 and 44 in contact with, and extending directly down, base portion 12, as well as adding to the visual appeal of the article in association with the bottle, and in preventing separation of the cord and retaining member(s).